

REMARKS

The Office Action of September 23, 2003 has been carefully studied. The Office Action is directed to a Restriction Requirement on the one hand, and an election of species on the other hand. Before addressing the contents of the Office Action, Applicants note that a formal Information Disclosure Statement is being concurrently filed with the appropriate references. In addition, Applicants hereby disclose that there is possibly a relevant copending application, namely Applicants' U.S. Application Serial No. 10/054,868 filed January 25, 2002, Attorney Docket (ATOCM-245), claiming priority of French application 01/01114 filed January 26, 2001. A copy of the copending application is not attached because the same Examiner is treating both applications.

Restriction/Election

In response to the Restriction Requirement between group I and group II, Applicants respectfully elect group I. As to the propriety of the Restriction Requirement, Applicants respectfully point out that the application indicates that decoration by sublimation is an old technique and that the mere protecting of an article with a transparent layer is also an old technique. Consequently, inasmuch as the patentability of claim 22 resides in the article of claim 21 which is produced by injection molding a composition including to claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that the final product of claim 22 is not patentably distinct from the article of claim 21. Under such circumstances, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has ample basis to withdraw the Restriction Requirement.

With respect to the Election of Species requirement, as set forth on page 3, numbered paragraph 4, Applicants hereby elect the composition of A, B, C, D and M, an example of such a species being example 19 in Table 2 on page 24 of the specification. It is understood that if the Examiner cannot find prior art which negatives the patentability of Applicants' elected species, the Examiner is duty bound to examine the other species of Applicants' invention, including, for example, generic claim 1 which, though specifying (A) and (B) is an open claim which would permit the inclusion of other components.

With respect to the newly added claims, they are substantially addressed to permutations of the elected species A, B, C, D and M.

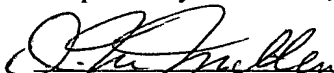
It is also seen that a new Abstract of the Disclosure is being provided on a separate page.

It is also seen that the claims are amended in pertinent part so as to utilize patent vernacular and to utilize the term "inclusive" in claims 13-20 since the expression "between x and y percent, without the term "inclusive" might be subject to an interpretation which would not include zero as part of the range. By utilizing the term "inclusive" it is now clear that zero is part of the range. (It is the word "between" that might otherwise create a problem.) Also, Applicants wish to point out that the amendment to claim 1 is merely for purposes of clarification and is not intended to narrow the scope of the claim.

In view of this response, an early action on the merits of the application is courteously requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,


I. William Millen, Reg. No. 19,544
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)

MILLEN, WHITE, ZELANO
& BRANIGAN, P.C.
Arlington Courthouse Plaza 1, Suite 1400
2200 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22201
Telephone: (703) 243-6333
Facsimile: (703) 243-6410

Attorney Docket No.: ATOCM-246

Date: October 23, 2003
IWM:pdv K:\Atocm\200-299\246\REPLY2.doc